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NSC BRIEFING

20 December 1960

ETHIOPIA

- I. Motivation of Ethiopian coup leaders, who are now all dead, is obscure.
  - A. Bodyguard commander Menghistou Neway and his brother Germami probably acted to seize power for personal aggrandizement.
    1. Germami, a relative political unknown, is reported to have been a Communist sympathizer and to have been a frequent visitor at the Soviet Embassy.
    2. Director of Security Workneh Gabeyhou may have been forced to cooperate.
  - B. Apart from Germami's reported sympathies, there is no indication of Bloc involvement. No evidence UAR complicity.
  - C. Action timed for Emperor's absence.
    1. Bodyguard support obtained by appeal to discontent over pay.
    2. They also hoodwinked by rumors Emperor was dead and they were protecting the throne.
  - D. Promise of liberal parliamentary regime which would put Ethiopia into current of modern African nationalism, was designed to appeal to younger, educated Ethiopians in government and military circles.
- II. Emperor likely to take severe reprisals even though publicly talking of forgiveness.
  - A. Government angered by slaughter of at least 7 of 19 ministerial officials held by coup leaders; followers now being hunted down.

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- may have*
- B. Crown prince, who ~~probably~~ has lost all chance of succeeding to throne with Emperor's blessing and may be exiled to remote area.
- C. Entire group of younger progressive element in government and military circles may be removed as suspect elements.
1. This would be a severe setback to modernization of the country.
- D. Emperor not likely initiate far reaching reforms but may give lip service to such minor reforms as increasing parliament role in government.

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